

Volume 21

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Spring
2000



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Newsletter of the Arkansas Native Plant Society

President's Message

I'm sorry everyone couldn't attend the spring meeting just concluded at Petit Jean. For those who weren't able to attend, the eighty or so registrants can tell you that it was one of our best. Thanks to Robert Wright for his careful planning, to trip leaders for their willingness to share their knowledge and expertise, to those entertaining and educating us with programs each evening, AND to those early, far-sighted Arkansans who saw the unique beauty of Petit Jean and worked to save it as a state park. As you all know, we're not a "cash cow" organization and have not pushed hard to encourage extra donations and gifts. We don't have the skills and personnel to assist individuals in coordinating their charitable giving— but if you feel we are being good stewards of the Society's funds and are distributing them appropriately to good causes, I would request you consider the Society in your annual giving and perhaps a bequest in your will. Any donation could add to our general revenues or to one of the specific funds whose descriptions and purposes are detailed in the annual directory. No pressure— just lots of good causes in need of our support. I would hope someday a group of like-minded Arkansans will look back at what we are doing now and be appreciative—as we are of the founders of Petit Jean State Park.

Happy Springtime in Arkansas!
John Simpson

Free Gold

The society has 1500 packets of *Coreopsis* seed.

All you need to obtain them is to contact
ANPS President John Simpson and let him know how many packets
you would like and where to send them.

[See Claytonia cover for telephone number and email address.]

Spring General Meeting Report By Robert Wright

Around 80 people gathered at Petit Jean State Park on March 31 for a weekend of viewing and doing. Mather Lodge served up good food, we were able to dodge most raindrops, and the evening programs were excellent. Friday evening, Park Interpreter Steve Dunlap gave us an intriguing peek into how the original park facilities were constructed, using slides from an old scrapbook recently brought to light. Then Carl Slaughter took us around Petit Jean and Arkansas through the seasons with some superb wildflower slides. On Saturday most visitors took the Cedar Creek trail and the Ridge Trail, enjoying insights provided by leaders Lois Wilson, Mary Ann King, Dan Marsh, and Eric Sundell. At last report the identity of an *Anemone* species was under lively discussion, prolonged by the near-absence of flowers. Besides being the weekend of *Claytonia virginica*, we saw lots of *Viola pedata*, birdsfoot violet, and enough other flowers and scenes to turn a one-mile walk into a full half day's prowl through the woods. Those folks opting for the fields and woods around the Visitor Center got to enjoy the observations and exclamations of Carl Amason. Saturday evening's program started with Bill Shepherd showing and telling us how the video, "Arkansas' Natural Heritage" was produced. Then everyone was entertained by Carl Amason's trip down memory lane, looking at slides from past ANPS field trips. All in all, it was a good family outing for the ANPS family.



Field Trips

Thursday, May 11

Glade Sites near Sims.

This Ouachita Chapter outing will meet Susan Hooks at the Harvest Foods parking lot at Grand Avenue and 270 in Hot Springs at 9:30AM. Bring a sack lunch and hiking shoes.

Friday and Saturday May 12,13

Felsenthal National Wildlife Refuge

The personnel of the refuge invite birdwatchers and wildflower enthusiasts to see Red-cockaded Woodpeckers and other birds along with the flush of spring blooming wildflowers. Saturday's trip is a repeat of the Friday trip. Bring your own lunch and drink. Those coming from the east meet at the refuge headquarters west of Crossett on US 82 at 9:00; those coming from the west will meet at Best Western King's Inn in El Dorado on US 167 at 8:00. Contact person is Ruth McDonald at the refuge, PO Box 1157, Crossett 71635 or call during business hours at 1-807-364-3168. Or you may contact Carl Amason at 1-870-748-2362.

Saturday, May 20

Baker Prairie.

Bernetta Hinterthuer (501-582-0467) will show us late spring prairie flowers. Meet at 11:00 a.m. in Harrison on Goblin Drive adjacent to the high school on the west side of the city. Bring a hat, your lunch and plenty of water.

Spring General Meeting Minutes

April 1, 2000

The spring meeting of the Arkansas Native Plant Society was brought to order at 7:20 o'clock, p.m., at Mather Lodge, Petit Jean State Park, John Simpson, President, presiding.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Carl Amason moved to accept the minutes of the fall meeting as printed in the Claytonia. Lew Huddle seconded. The minutes were approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT: A copy of the Treasurer's Report was distributed to the members showing a balance of \$5,549.66 in the operating fund and \$21,942.76 in the scholarship and award funds. Bill Shepherd moved to approve the Treasurer's report; Richard Speairs seconded. The Treasurer's Report was approved.

SCHOLARSHIP AND AWARDS

COMMITTEE REPORT: Annette Holder, chairman of the Scholarships/Awards Committee, recommended that April Chamblee from UALR and Travis Marsico from Arkansas Tech be awarded \$500 each from the Aileen McWilliam Scholarship Fund. April is studying the germination of native plants at Pinnacle Mountain State Park and Travis is studying plant succession in an Ozark National Forest clearcut. The Committee also recommended that Edith Hudson of the University of Arkansas, who is studying the management technique and conservation of Moore's Delphinium, and Chris Doffitt and Herbert Young from the University of Louisiana at Monroe, who are surveying Ouachita and Nevada Counties of Arkansas be awarded \$500.00 each from the Delzie Demaree Research Grant. The Board is in agreement with the Committee's recommendations. Carl Amason moved that the scholarships be awarded; Linda Gatti Clark seconded, the motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS: There was no old business at this time.

NEW BUSINESS: President Simpson commended Ron Doran on the ANPS website. President Simpson announced that Dr. Johnny Gentry, who could not attend because of illness, was asking ANPS to help sponsor the Arkansas Flora Conference in Fayetteville on May 19, 2000. Linda Gatti Clark explained that regional experts from Oklahoma, Texas, and Missouri who have been involved in publishing a Flora are being invited to advise the Arkansas Conference people and hopefully keep them from making unnecessary mistakes. These experts will need lodging and travel money and Dr. Gentry felt that \$500 to \$1000 would be in line with donations already donated by the Nature Conservancy and Natural Heritage Commission. Dr. Simpson reported that the Board felt that this money could be taken from the Dwight Moore Fund since the Conference is indirectly involved with publication and there are few demands on this fund and that the Board was unanimous in its consensus that we help sponsor the meeting by donating \$1,000.00. John Pelton moved that ANPS donate \$1,000.00 to help sponsor the Arkansas Flora Conference, Carl Amason seconded. After discussion, Lew Huddle called for the question, and the motion passed. A Nominating Committee will be appointed by the President to nominate persons for the positions of Treasurer, Editor and Vice-President. Thera Lou Adams is resigning from the responsibility of being in charge of the T-shirts and Jason Anders does not want another term as Treasurer.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The New Mexico Native Plant Society is selling bumper stickers at a minimum order of 25 for \$1.00 each. ANPS will order \$50.00 worth, or 50 stickers, and sell them for \$2.00 each.

Jack Stewart with the Newton

County Ozark Ecotours announced that 20 acres had been purchased just outside Jasper, Arkansas, and there is a new lodge and learning center, the Woodland Learning Center and Buffalo Lodge. The lodge has room for sleeping up to 25 people and is open year-round. The Woodland Learning Center is a place for outdoor activities, nature study and experiential learning opportunities for young people of Arkansas. More information is available by calling 870-446-5898 or 446-6208, or toll free 1-877-622-5901. The e-mail addresses are woodland@jasper.yournet.com, or ecotours@jasper.yournet.com. Kathy Downs is the Operations Manager.

Lois Wilson announced the annual spring plant sale at the Lichterman Nature Center April 13, 14, and 15. The Thursday, April 13, preview party has an admission fee. Friday and Saturday, April 14 and 15, is free. It will be open from 9:00 to 5:00 o'clock. Bill Summers from the Missouri Native Plant Society invited our

members to attend their spring meeting April 14, 15, and 16, in West Plains, Missouri.

President-Elect Robert Wright announced that the fall meeting will be in Heber Springs, where ANPS began twenty years ago, the last weekend in September.

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Clark, Secretary



News Items

OUACHITA CHAPTER DONATION

The Ouachita Chapter voted unanimously to make a \$305 contribution to support the Society's participation in the Flora of Arkansas Project. (The ANPS has established a dedicated fund for contributions to the Project.)

The Ouachita Chapter wishes to offer this donation as a challenge to other chapters and society members for this very worthy project.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Ethel M. Lester gave a \$100 donation to the Aileen McWilliam Fund in honor of her sister on her birthday in Nov. 1999.

OZARK CHAPTER MEETING

The annual spring meeting of the Ozark Chapter, ANPS, will be held **May 6th and 7th at Cave Mountain, Newton County.** Bob Chester has offered us the use of his cabins on Cave Mountain. Meet at noon at the Boxley Church and proceed to the property where the meeting will be held. Those who expect to arrive late, please call Burnetta Hinterthuer (501-582-0467) for directions. There will be a hike to Whittaker Point (also known as Hawksbill Crag) before our potluck and business meeting. On Sunday there will be a hike to the beautiful Dug Hollow area. The walk to Whittaker point is about 1/2 mile and of relatively easy relief, the hike to Dug Hollow a little more strenuous. Bring food to share at the potluck and for breakfast and lunch the next day.



Coneflowers In North Central Arkansas:

Prairie Plants Display on Summer Roadsides.

By Philip Hyatt

June provides summer travelers a brilliant display of coneflowers in north central Arkansas. Three species of coneflowers (genus *Echinacea*) grow across the north part of the state. Here are a few hints on what and where they are, and how to see them. The three prairie species are (from common to rare) Pale Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea pallida*), Wavy leaf Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea simulata*), and Bush's Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea paradoxa* var. *paradoxa*). All three belong to the sunflower family, having both ray and disk flowers. In sunflowers (*Helianthus annuus*), the bright ray flowers encircle the disk, which produces the seeds bird and birder love. The rays in Pale Purple Coneflower and Wavy leaf Purple

Coneflower are indeed purple, but Bush's Purple Coneflower somehow has yellow ray flowers. The eastern United States version, known as Purple Coneflower or Eastern Purple Coneflower, likes more shaded habitats.

The three prairie species thrive on roadsides, which seem to imitate the prairie habitat they prefer. In 1812, a traveler (Schoolcraft) noted that most of Baxter County was prairie with "grasses up to the horses bellies" and "prairie birds", (perhaps prairie chickens?) in an overland trip between Norfolk and Bull Shoals with the rivers filled with dense cane thickets. Fire suppression has let trees invade most of the prairie, but remnants of prairie survive in the mown roadside habitats that lack the competition of trees.

Wavy leaf Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea simulata*) has been known in north central Arkansas for some time. Its one of the "lumped" species that didn't make the Arkansas plant atlas in 1988, except as a note under Pale Purple Coneflower. These two species are closely related.

Sometimes, especially in plants, the chromosome number somehow doubles. In this case, Pale Purple Coneflower has 11 pairs of chromosomes, while Wavy leaf Purple Coneflower has 22 pairs. This doubling creates new species. When such doubling occurs the new species (Wavy leaf Purple Coneflower, in this case) is often much more robust than the "parent" species. Fortunately Wavy leaf Purple Coneflower can be told from Pale Purple Coneflower by its yellow pollen (vs. white in Pale Purple Coneflower). Huge stands of Wavy leaf Purple Coneflower emblazon the roadsides of U. S. Hwy. 62/412 in Fulton and Sharp counties. The species also occurs in adjoining counties. The PLANTS database (visit plants.usda.gov on the internet) lists Wavy leaf Purple Coneflower as occurring in the Arkansas counties of Baxter, Boone, and Stone, as well as 14 Missouri counties.

Specimens at the University of Arkansas and the Missouri Botanical Gardens would add several Arkansas counties to the range of Wavy leaf Purple Coneflower.

MacGregor, when he published on the genus back in the 1960s, said a 5 to 10 mile zone of intergradation occurs between the two in the Arkansas and Missouri Ozarks. From collecting experience in Baxter County, the zone is perhaps 30-40 miles wide in that area, with a little *E. pallida* in eastern Baxter County, and (if memory is correct) *E. simulata* occurring in eastern Marion County. Having worked a couple summers in Stone County, I'd say the Salem Plateau is pretty much the range of *E. simulata* in Arkansas. It may occur on the edges of the Springfield Plateau, but (in the areas where I've worked) it's rapidly replaced by *E. pallida*. Wavy leaf Purple Coneflower does indeed occur in northern Boone County too. The plants are, as Edwin B. Smith said, "good biological species, but poor morphological species" as it gets difficult to tell which is which in the overlap zone. If you cross them, you get a sterile plant of $n=33$. But in the zone of overlap, it gets difficult to tell them apart. Of course, Bush's Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea paradoxa* var. *paradoxa*) pops up at selected locations in the same range. Its bright yellow flowers make it immediately distinct from the other two. This variety is another Ozark endemic; that is, like Wavy leaf Purple Coneflower, it is found only in the Ozarks. Another variety of Wavy leaf Purple Coneflower occurs in the Ouachitas of Oklahoma (according to MacGregor and the PLANTS database) and into Texas (PLANTS database).

The Sanguin Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea sanguinea*) hopped across into Miller County from Texas. It grows in sandy roadside soils there. If you want a nice trip in June, visit Mammoth Springs and the surrounding roadsides, and watch for huge displays of Purple. You'll likely be looking

at Wavy leaf Coneflower. Pale purple flowered plants could be (you guessed it) Pale Purple Coneflower. Both species will hang on in fire-suppressed woodlands for a long time in low numbers. Like Bush's Purple Coneflower, they also occur in glades and other naturally open habitats.

A plant finding guide? Pale Purple Coneflower needs no introduction, it's so widespread, and I've given you enough info so you can find Wavy leaf Purple Coneflower along the highway (see above). Bush's Purple Coneflower is harder to find. At least one population grows at a park north of Lead Hill in Marion County. In Baxter County it can be found along the first gravel road a few miles south from Norfolk Dam's Paved road, southeast. It's also in a small prairie patch 1.6 miles due west of Mountain Home, south of the paved road in a very slowly developing subdivision. I'd be excited to relocate the site of a collection from "east of Mtn. Home" with no other specific site information available. This rare species needs protection; so don't dig up Arkansas plants if you find them. It's tracked by the Arkansas State Heritage Commission, and protected and listed on Forest Service lands (hence, no site information is given). Seed are available from a few commercial growers, so contact me if you get desperate and I'll put you in contact with them (hyatt@speedgate.net or Philip E. Hyatt, 211 Burma Road, Pineville, LA 71360).*****



Historical Brief

*The Importance of Being Earnest**

By Carl R. Slaughter

The Asiatic Day Flower, *Commelina communis*, is a flower that has two prominent blue petals and one small white to colorless petal that is inferior to and almost hidden by the shadow of the two erect petals. The story is told that Linnaeus, the father of modern botany, named this flower after three Dutch botanist brothers by the name of Commelyn. Two of the brothers worked hard, published their work and earnestly applied themselves to their tasks. They were compared, by Linnaeus, to the showy blue petals of the Asiatic Day Flower. The third brother, who Linnaeus felt had not earnestly applied himself because he had not published his work, was likened to the small white insignificant petal.

It is terrible to have and not share knowledge.

*"The Importance of Being Earnest" is an 1885 comedy by Oscar Wilde.



Editor's End Notes

Ah, Spring! For ANPS members what can beat a meandering stroll through the woods and across the fields to see nature breaking out of its winter dormancy ablaze with vibrant colors? If you look close you may even see things that have been there for years that you just haven't noticed before. We often equate "belly botany" with liverworts and mosses and other such "low life" but there are some flowering things down there too. Since I am a part of the Arkansas Vascular Flora Project (AVFP) I have taken to going slower and looking more closely on my hikes and I have already found five county records on my own 18 acre patch of fields and woods. Some of those plants have been difficult to identify because of the lack of a good illustrated set of keys for Arkansas. It is the goal of the AVFP to develop such a book and to obtain and maintain a better record of what plants actually exist in Arkansas. I think I can speak for the rest of ANPS and state that we are fully behind the project. If you would like to help consider attending the conference in May or contact any project member to see what you can do.

Thanks again to all those who submit articles for this your newsletter. If you have submitted something and it isn't included look in the next issue -- for postage reasons we limit each newsletter to 5 pages. For those with web access check out your website at www.anps.org. Articles and photos are welcome there too.

ARKANSAS VASCULAR FLORA CONFERENCE

Date: **May 19, 2000**

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Location: Continuing Education Center

University of Arkansas

2 East Center Street

Fayetteville, Arkansas

Pre-registration, required by May 12: General \$10.00; Students \$5.00

SPEAKERS

Ted Barkley Botanical Research Institute of Texas

George Diggs, Jr. Austin College

Tom Foti Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission

Johnnie Gentry University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

Bill Shepherd Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission

Scott Simon The Nature Conservancy

John Simpson Arkansas Native Plant Society

Gary Tucker FTN Associates

Ron Tyrl Oklahoma State University

George Yatskievych Missouri Department of Conservation & Missouri Botanical Garden

James Zarucchi Missouri Botanical Garden

Mail in the registration form on the following page or contact the Division of Continuing Education at (501) 575-3604 or 1-800-952-1165, about registration and directions.

The Continuing Education Center is located in downtown Fayetteville, about one mile east of campus.

Contact Johnnie Gentry, Moderator, Arkansas Vascular Flora Conference, University of Arkansas Herbarium, University Museum, Fayetteville, AR 72701, telephone (501) 575-4372 or 575-7925, fax (501) 575-8766, about other Conference questions. www.uark.edu/~arkflora

Organized by the Arkansas Vascular Flora Committee

SPONSORS

Arkansas Academy of Science

Arkansas Native Plant Society

Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission

FTN Associates

The Nature Conservancy

University of Arkansas Herbarium





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If your mailing label has a 99 or earlier it is time to renew!

Life members will have an LF

Please fill in the information form on the opposite side of this page and send it with your renewals, applications for membership, changes of name, address, e-mail address or telephone numbers to the address given on the form: **[Not to the editor.]**

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The purpose of the Arkansas Native Plant Society

is to promote the preservation, conservation, and study of the wild plants and vegetation of Arkansas, the education of the public to the value of the native flora and its habitat, and the publication of related information.

Claytonia

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Claytonia

Newsletter of the Arkansas Native Plant Society

President's Message

On May 19, 2000, ANPS member Dr. Johnnie Gentry hosted a "coming out party" – the official kick-off of the Arkansas Vascular Flora Project. The Flora Project is a compilation of information on all the native vascular species of our state – including confirmed ranges, identification keys, and illustrations and/or photographs of typical plants or specific features of a plant to assist in identification. Over the expected eight to ten years for completion of the project, teams will also be in the field collecting herbarium specimens.

Dr. Gentry has assembled an impressive committee of botanists from colleges and universities across the state and even into Louisiana. On the above date, Dr. Gentry and his committee members heard presentations by other botanists who had worked on similar projects in Missouri, Oklahoma, and Texas. A "User's Panel" of representatives from the ANPS, Arkansas Nature Conservancy, and the Department of Natural Heritage discussed ideas on how the Flora could be developed for maximal benefit as well as thoughts on what the different user groups could offer as assistance in furthering the program. The final presentation was from botanists at the Missouri Botanical Garden who discussed the massive project directed there – The Vascular Flora of North America. Dr. Gentry closed the day giving a charge to each participant, guest, and observer to tell at least twenty people about the project and what it will mean to us in the future.

I'm pleased to have been asked to represent the ANPS there – and pleased to have been able to report to the committee that we remain committed in spirit to the project and will probably to continue our financial support as our means will allow (not to neglect other worthy applicants for our scholarships and awards). This is a great project to celebrate here on the twentieth anniversary of our founding. More on the Vascular Project will be discussed at the fall meeting late in September at Heber Springs. I hope to see you there.

Happy Summer in Arkansas!
John Simpson

**BOOK YOUR ROOM FOR THE FALL MEETING
NOW WHILE THEY ARE STILL AVAILABLE.**

ANPS FALL MEETING -- HEBER SPRINGS, AR**Friday, September 29**

4:00 - 6:00 p.m. **Registration**, sign up for field trips.

Holiday Inn Express Convention Center

Hwy 25 N, Heber Springs

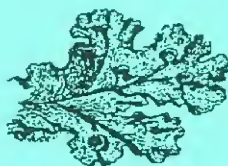
6:00 p.m. dinner on your own

7:00 until..... **Auction!**

Be sure to bring your donations of plants, seeds, bulbs, books, etc. This is one of our major fund raising projects to support our scholarships/grants.

Saturday, September 30,

9:00 a.m. Meet in the Holiday Inn parking lot for field trips. If you plan to go to the Big Creek Natural Area, you should bring lunch and something to drink. There are two trails at this location, so we will probably not be returning to Heber Springs prior to the dinner hour. The area is primitive and there is limited parking. Expect to see fantastic scenery, exquisite fall colors, and yes even lovely fall flowers.



Other trips will be planned if needed. Please be sure to sign up for the trips when you register.

DINNER ON YOUR OWN

7:30 p.m. **General Meeting**

Meet at the Carl Garner Visitor Center for Greer's Ferry Lake -near dam (Hwy 25 N)
Program to be announced later.

**Sunday, October 1**

9:00 a.m. Meet in the Holiday Inn parking lot for field trips.

Destination to be announced later.

Accommodations

We can get the Convention Center at the Holiday Inn Express free, if we fill **twenty** rooms. All rooms will be \$49. Please mention the ANPS when reserving your room.

Lodging: Holiday Inn Express
(501) 362-1000 **\$49.00**
3450 Hwy 25 N

Colonial Motor Inn
(501) 362-5846 \$ 54.00/ \$ 29.00
2949 Hwy 25 N

Lake & Riverside Inn
(501) 362-3161 \$ 50.00/\$ 40.00
2322 Hwy 25 N

Restaurants

All of these are located on Highway 25 N.
Circle H Steak House
McPhearsons
Brother's Bar-B-Q
China Delight
Luigis
and fast food (McDonald's etc.....)

Annette Holder is working on a display for the 20th anniversary celebration. If anyone has any anecdotes, pictures, clippings, etc... please send them to her ASAP.
3506 Lakewood Dr.
Jonesboro, AR 72404
e-mail: aholder@nettleton.crsc.k12.ar.us



Fall Field Trip

Saturday, October 21.

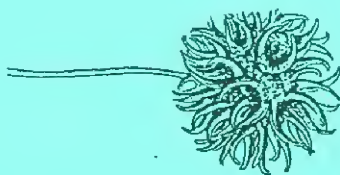
NE Arkansas

Trip to see the *Lindera melissifolia* (pondberry) populations under state management on the Missouri border in northeast Arkansas and adjacent Missouri. We'll see the plant in fruit, observe how it grows in single-sex clones, and learn about conservation strategies of the Natural Heritage Department and the comparable agency in Missouri.

Meet in Success, Arkansas, 11:00 a.m., at the intersection of highways 211 and 328, about 10 miles west-northwest of Corning.

Bring your own food and drink.

Contact: Robert Wright 501-771-0717
compubar@aristotle.net



Some Notes on *Iris cristata*

By Carl Amason

One of the most charming woodland flowers in Arkansas is *Iris cristata* and it is unmistakably an Iris though some may mistake it for an orchid of some sort. It seldom comes down on the Coastal Plain but prefers to stay in the rocky Ouachita and Ozark Mountain areas where it is abundant in the moist woodlands adjacent to flowing streams where it doesn't stay flooded but the soil doesn't dry out and there is a consistent source of moisture especially in the growing and blooming season. Its natural range is widespread and is found growing all across the southeast into southeastern Missouri across central Arkansas into eastern Oklahoma. It may be found in acid to neutral soils and it seems to like to live around rocks as long as it never dries out.

In early spring the leaves grown in a typical iris fan shape and the buds emerge from the developing leaves. When it blooms it has three longer sepals (that look like petals) that have darker bluish or purplish markings around the crests where there are white bands that go into yellow where the true purplish or blue petals, which are erect, are found. The sepals have the characteristic crest, which gives it the scientific name of *cristata*, a feature that is unique among the world's species of irises of which only a few have crests; the others only have a contrasting colored stripe or signal which is typical of wetland irises and a bearded feature which is typical of the bearded or German irises which prefer lime or sweet dry soil. Crests are uncommon among irises but are fairly common in nature; especially among birds. Chickens – especially roosters—have a crest on their heads. Another iris feature is the almost succulent petal-like styles that lay upon the sepals and cover the stamens and pistil.

This is one of the more choice wildflowers that grow in America and the European gardeners find *Iris cristata* to be

very accommodating as it does well in cultivation where a low growing perennial is desirable. It grows from rhizomes that radiates in runners that arise from a knot and also has knots where the foliage and flowers grow. It is a desirable rock garden plant and is easily grown from the rooted cuttings when it flowers and is not permitted to dry completely or rot from over-watering.

Its color is one of which some discussions declare it to be blue or purple. Most people declare it to be lilac, or orchid, or some other color that has boot blue and purple pigments. Blue color in nature is not common but when the flower is placed by something blue, it looks purplish and when placed by something purple the color seems bluer; it isn't a spectrum color. However, there is a pure white form with yellow throat markings that is not common in the wild or in cultivation but it is just as easily grown – or almost so. After flowering the foliage continues to grow and can get to ten or maybe twelve inches long but it is usually shorter. It goes dormant during the growing season.

This iris is a delight to see in bloom and in nature. A colony may arise from a single rhizome. There is some variation in size --not much--and color – again not much except the white form. It is commercially available in several slight color variations but all are lovely. To see them in the wild is one of the joys of seeing wildflowers so do not pick the flowers – let them go to seed and hopefully there will always be some wild *Iris cristata*.



SILENE



Some Notes on *Silene Virginiana*

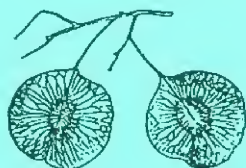
By Carl Amason

There are very few spectrum red flowers that are native to Arkansas and *Silene virginiana* is one of them. It is found in the mountains of central Arkansas, to the east, and to the north into Canada. It is quite hardy but does not come down on the Coastal Plain as a common wildflower, but there are a few scattered occurrences. Where it does grow it is rocky or well drained and often it is found on disturbed areas, especially near roadsides where it is frequently photographed. They grow on the tops of Rich Mountain and Mt. Magazine where they delight early summer visitors. To one most knowledgeable about wildflowers their first encounter with *Silene virginiana* is a feeling of mixed reaction: of delight, belief and disbelief. These late spring red flowers catch even the eyes of men who know little about wildflowers. Some common names include Fire Pink, and Catchfly. Of course red flowers usually incorporate "fire" into common names and pinks are an old English name for members of Caryophyllaceae (Pink Family) that includes carnations or *Dianthus* as well as

Silene. The "pink" name seems to have nothing to do with color.

Silene virginiana, named for the original site of the state of Virginia and *Silene* a name that includes species found across North America, Europe and Asia. It is usually found in light woodlands of deciduous trees and the edges of woods and roadsides where it grows sprawling from a center or 5 or 6 stems up to six inches tall and over a foot across, or from a clump that grows upright over 12 inches tall. The plant blooms for several weeks on the sticky stems (source of the common name catchfly) with bright red petals about 1 ½ to 2 inches long with notched ends, in an arrangement of a rimless spoked circle. As lovely as they are some flowers are badly affected with a mold whereas nearby flowers are not affected. They grow from a fairly short-lived perennial root system and maintain their wild populations through seed production. They are easily grown from seed but they also seem to be selective in where they grow. In the juvenile and winter growth they make a rosette of leaves that are widest at the ends and on the stems are always opposite. In or out of bloom it is a very distinctive wildflower but the red flowers are a delight to see. Perhaps they are a favorite of hummingbirds but hummingbirds seem to prefer other red flowers greater.

Among Arkansas wildflowers there are several other *Silene* species mostly white with a few other established red exotic species. It is well represented in the flora of the Southeast but some of them do not cross the Mississippi River. As a surprise to many the exotic *Saponaria officinalis* (Bouncing Bet) and the many chickweeds are also related genera.



Haynesville Louisiana Celebration of Butterflies

The second annual Haynesville Celebration of Butterflies will be in Haynesville on September 16-18, 2000 at the Claiborne Parish Fairgrounds. The admission of \$3 for adults and \$2 for ages 5-18 is good for both days. Dr. Gary Noel Ross will be an active consultant and lecturer. Haynesville is about 30 minutes due south of Magnolia, Arkansas and is located just over the state border. There will be birding field trips, programs on gardening for butterflies, both the caterpillar stage and of course the adult stage which is enjoyed by almost everyone. There will be field trips to see butterflies in their natural elements and there will be a butterfly conservatory that is an enclosure of netting with many living species of butterflies and many blooming plants for nectar sources. There will be an emphasis on the conservation of butterflies and the cultivation of food plants for the homeowner or butterfly enthusiasts to consider bringing these winged beauties up close. There is a lot of symbolism, mythology, spirituality and magic to these special insects. There will be flower walks with special mention of the needs of the caterpillar and adult stages.

Jessie and Richard Johnson of Caroline Dorman Nature Preserve will also have a program, as will insect collectors with their collections. There is so much to know about butterflies and their needs that this celebration has been described as a classroom for learning about nature. There will be plenty of food vendors, arts and crafts, and of course plants. The festival is sponsored by several educational agencies in Louisiana and Arkansas. For more information contact Mrs. Loice Kendrick, 1937 Bailey Avenue Haynesville, LA 71038, or e-mail at loicekendrick@excite.com



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9:00 - Noon Hands on Workshop

Noon - 1:30 Lunch, herbal shopping
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Participants will be rolling in dough and stuffed with useful information about pasta... plus all aspects of growing and using culinary herbs. The afternoon will be filled with fragrant oils derived from beneficial plants
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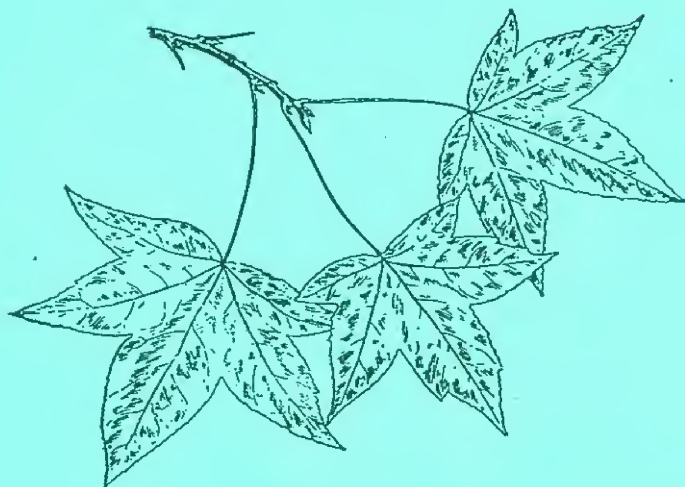
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Editor's Ramblin' Notes

As I write this at the height of summer I am sitting in our bay window overlooking what looks like a late fall wood lot. The oaks, hickories, black gums and wild black cherries are yellow or brown and have lost a high percentage of their foliage. If you can stand to walk out there in the 100° F plus temperatures the grass crackles under your feet. I am about to become depressed! Can you get cabin fever in the summer? I am definitely ready for the rains and the cooler temperatures of fall!

Searcy has finished another section of the bike/hike trail that makes a big loop around town and I am really anxious to try it out. I am also ready to take my students on a field trip but not with heat indexes in the danger range.

Before school started we made an extended road trip to New England. All of the northeast states seemed to have had a cool wet summer and it was lush green. The summer wildflowers were abundant and it seems like the New Englanders seemed to be trying to outdo one another with their personal flower gardens. All the towns and villages seemed to be ablaze with color. I think we are finally catching up with the Europeans in our appreciation of what flowers can do for the landscape.

We took US 20 from Boston to Tanglewood instead of the Mass Pike and took our time to "smell the roses" and visit a few antique shops along the way. It was truly a delight. It was also refreshing to have to pull the blankets up around us to keep warm while we watched and listened to Van Cliburn and the Boston Symphony out under the stars on the beautiful grounds of Tanglewood.

From Tanglewood in the Berkshires we went up through some of the verdant Green Mountains of Vermont – wow, is that ever a multiple redundant statement. From there we drove up through the White Mountains of New Hampshire. They weren't white -- but

come winter they definitely will be. We really lucked out because it was one of those few crystal clear, low humidity, days that are rare in summer and you could even see the top of Mt. Washington the tallest mountain in the northeast. Walking the trails you knew you weren't in Arkansas even with your eyes shut due to that unique wonderful aroma wafting from the balsam firs.

From there we took a leisurely drive across Maine to Acadia National Park. Going to Newport, RI to see the Breakers and some other architectural gems and to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston to see the Van Gogh exhibit was my wife's request for the trip. Going to the concert at Tanglewood was my daughter's request. Going to the mountains was my request but going to Acadia was on the each of our lists. It is a wonderfully diverse place with mountains, rocky and sandy ocean shores, quiet lakes, and trails that run the gamut of strenuousness. Along with the diversity of habitats comes a diversity of animal and plant life. I am truly thankful to our national park system for preserving this and other gems of nature.

All good things must come to an end and it was back to Arkansas. Pennsylvania's interstate mediums were aburst with poppies and other wildflowers. Ohio's dull flat topography between Columbus and Cincinnati was enlivened with roadside plantings of giant sunflowers. I didn't see much of significance after that except the inside of my eyelids.

When we got home it was 106 not including the heat index. And after almost three weeks of 70-degree weather it was like walking into a giant oven when we got out of the car -- and it hasn't cooled down much since.

Hopefully it will have cooled down by the end of September for our annual fall meeting. I am ready to get out and see the wonders of Arkansas. The Big Creek area is not as spectacular as Acadia but it has its

own beautiful bluffs and meandering creek and unlike Acadia there won't be thousands of people around. You might even luck out like Robert Wright and I did the last time the ANPS met at Heber Springs (can it be 20 years?) and be so intent at looking at things that you get left behind at Big Creek Natural Area without a vehicle.



SEARCHING FOR DWARF SPIDERWORT

By John Pelton

The search for *Tradescantia longipes*, Dwarf Spiderwort has been centered in the Ouachita Mountain area, primarily because Dr. Ed Smith's Atlas of Arkansas Flora reported Montgomery County as a location for it.

The search was rewarded by finding a small group around some cedar trees at Fulton Glade in 1999, in northern Montgomery County. Later in 1999 Frances and I were taking a short three-day vacation in the western Arkansas and eastern Oklahoma Ouachita Mountains. We like to leave Saline County via Winona Scenic Auto tour on Forest Road 132 and across scenic Highway 7 onto Forest Road 11, then follow 11 through northern Garland County into Yell County and then south on Highway 27 to Mt. Ida. I noticed some *Tradescantia* species along Forest Road 11, but they were beyond certain identification so the search began the last week of March 2000.

Rae McKim had reported at our Ferndale 4H Center workshop that there were

probably *Tradescantia longipes* on their place at Crystal Hill Community three miles west of Ouachita on Highway 88.

The search was coming together in an area from Fulton Glade, northwest of Mt. Ida to the Cedar Fouch Recreation Area just west of Navy Landing on Lake Ouachita.

I found good populations at the following sites: Mazarn Shale Glades, Highway 11 between Highway 7 and 27.

There were hundreds of plants at these sites: Cedar Fouch Recreation Area on Lake Ouachita, Fulton Glade area, a wooded slope on the Irons Fork Recreation Area road, Rae McKim's yard and pasture.

Fulton Glade is the west end of the area surveyed. The *T. longipes* was near populations of *Tradescantia hirsuticaulis* and *Tradescantia ohioensis*. Cedar Fouch Recreation Area in Garland County is the eastern end of the surveyed area. The *T. longipes* population was mixed with a few *T. hirsuticaulis*, which I had also found on Cedar Fouch Road on the way to the recreation area.

Summary: The parameters seem to be at the ends of Mazarn shale outcrops in Montgomery, Garland and Yell Counties centered in the Iron Fork and Ouachita River and Lake drainage, and from Fulton Glade to Cedar Fouch Recreation Area.

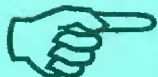
The other county Dr. Smith reports *T. longipes* is Pope County.

Dr. Tucker suggested I check out a *T. hirsuticaulis* area north of I-40 between Highway 7 and Highway 333 north from London.

There is a large sandstone outcrop which we can assume are northern parameters for *T. hirsuticaulis* in Arkansas. There is a very healthy population of *T. hirsuticaulis* on this area, but I didn't find *T. longipes*.

So three weeks of searching has resulted in at least pinpointing known and available sites where we can visit from the last week of March through April to see an Arkansas population of Dwarf Spiderwort.

The Golden Ocean - Patrick O'Brian



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**The purpose of the
Arkansas Native Plant Society**

is to promote the preservation, conservation, and study of the wild plants and vegetation of Arkansas, the education of the public to the value of the native flora and its habitat, and the publication of related information.

Claytonia

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Claytonia

Newsletter of the Arkansas Native Plant Society

President's Message

The holidays are over-as evidenced by all the beautiful seed catalogs arriving daily now. This may be a "down" period for outside activities but your Native Plant Society is staying busy. We've had a presence at the latest Arkansas State Trails Council meeting at Lake Fort Smith State Park and will be present at a planned meeting of the Advisory Council of Garvan Woodland Gardens in Hot Springs as they look for like-minded organizations to perhaps pool resources and strengths to achieve some common goals.

Wayne Owen, formerly the biologist of the Ouachita National Forest and now at Forest Service Regional Headquarters in Atlanta, has successfully contracted a seed company to prepare the packets of *Coreopsis tinctoria* as approved at the fall meeting in Mountain View. These will be available for distribution this spring and will have the ANPS listed on the packet as a sponsor. These packets will be sent to anyone on request and hopefully will be given away at plant fairs, lectures, etc.

Our web site (www.anps.org) continues to undergo revision. Suggestions for improvements to the page or for added links to a favorite pertinent site are welcomed. Ron Doran has graciously agreed to add the responsibility of "webmaster" to all the other things he does for the society as editor. THANKS! Our more artistic members might try their hand at creating a logo for the society to put onto the web page as well as society letterhead (the Executive Committee will review submissions at the spring meeting and possibly choose a winner then — prize to be determined).

Robert Wright has obviously worked hard to make the spring meeting at Petit Jean informative and enjoyable. I hope to see you all then.

John Simpson

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Saturday, March 18, Crooked Creek and Little Missouri Falls.

Lana and Bruce Ewing ((501-394-4666) will lead a day hike to see more Ozark Trillium than you could imagine, as well as Hepatica, trout lilies, and other early wildflowers. Meet at 10:00 a.m. in Big Fork (about 20 miles east of Mena) on Highway 8, at the community building. Bring your own drinks and food.

Spring General Meeting

Friday-Sunday, March 31-April 2, Petit Jean State Park. Spring General Meeting. Highlights: early spring flowers and other natural wonders of the park.

Friday 4:00-6:00 p.m. Registration

6:30 p.m. Served meal at Mather Lodge (**sign up for the meal by March 24 with Robert Wright, (501-771-0312)**)

7:30 p.m. "Petit Jean Scrapbook", presented by Steve Dunlap, a Park Interpreter

8:15 p.m. "The Seasons", a slide program on Petit Jean flowers by Carl Slaughter

Saturday 9:00 a.m. Meet at Mather Lodge for morning hikes and walks

(lunch Saturday on your own)

1:30 p.m. Meet at Mather Lodge for afternoon hikes and walks

5:00 p.m. Executive Board meeting

6:30 p.m. served meal at Mather Lodge

7:30 p.m. business meeting of ANPS members

8:00 p.m. "Arkansas' Natural Heritage" video presented by Bill Shepherd

8:45 p.m. "The first 20 years of ANPS" by Carl Amason (**be sure to send Carl your slides and snapshots ahead of time**)

Sunday: breakfast and hiking on your own

Reminder: get your reservations in pronto if you haven't already

Mather Lodge: 1-800-264-2462

Cedar Falls Motel: 1-501-727-5630

EconoLodge in Morrilton: 1-501-354-5101

Best Western in Morrilton: 1-501-354-0181

Saturday, April 15, Big Creek.

Oralee and Don Price (501-362-6781) will lead a walk to see crested Iris and other woods and streamside flowers. Meet at Visitor Center at Greer's Ferry Dam, Highway 25 North out of Heber Springs, at 10:00 a.m. Bring lunch and something to drink.

Saturday, May 20, Baker Prairie.

Bernetta Hinterthuer (501-582-0467) will show us late spring prairie flowers. Meet at 11:00 a.m. in Harrison on Goblin Drive adjacent to the high school on the west side of the city. Bring your lunch and drinks.

MONPS Special Invitation

The Missouri Native Plant Society (MONPS) has scheduled one of its quarterly board meetings to be held on the weekend of 14-16 April 2000 in West Plains Missouri.

On behalf of the MONPS I would like to invite the members and friends of the Arkansas Native Plant Society to join us. You are familiar with the usual general format of our weekend meetings: a short mixer-gathering on Friday evening, field trip on Saturday, business meeting starting at 6:00PM on Saturday evening, and perhaps a short half-day field trip on Sunday morning. Jack H. Harris, President MONPS.
(314-894-9021) jahar@stlnet.com

Chapter News

Ouachita Chapter

Year 2000 greetings to our members and friends of the Ouachita Chapter of the Arkansas Native Plant Society.

First of all, since Pinnacle Mountain Visitors center is being remodeled we had to find a new place to meet. Carl Hunter contacted the Game and Fish Commission in Little Rock and we were given permission to use the boardroom from **10:30 until 3:00 on Saturday, the 22 of January.**

The Game and Fish building is in the Natural Resources Complex on Natural Resources drive off of Markham St. Turn east at the intersection of Shackleford and Markham St. Pass under 430 and watch for Natural Resources Drive. Then drive to the Game and Fish Building.

Secondly, please bring refreshments as you did last year when we met at Pinnacle Mountain. We can just snack for lunch.

Our program will include presentations by Douglas Zollner (director of Conservation, Nature Conservancy, member of ANPS). Dr. John Simpson (president of ANPS, charter member of the board of directors of the Arkansas Chapter of Nature Conservancy) will also be speaking. You will here from Bob Byers (Curator of Garvan Gardens, Secretary treasurer of the Ouachita Chapter), Carl Hunter (Author, past Deputy Director of the Game and Fish Commission, member of the Board of Directors of the ANPS, Ouachita Chapter member, and John Pelton (photographer, Past President of ANPS, President of the Ouachita Chapter) as well. Plan to come for fellowship, discussion, planning and entertainment. We are Blessed!

John Pelton, President
(501-316-1057)

Northeast Chapter

...naturally you are welcome to join our Northeast Chapter. We had three super field trips this past year. Found a new species for Arkansas: *Echinaceae simulata*, which is listed as a taxon near Bull Shoals Lake in southern MO. We have planned another great year, 2000, the turning year of the millennium. Please join as has Carl Amason, Carl Hunter and others. A 5-dollar investment in our chapter gives you compounding benefits!

Best wishes come true for you in the New Year!

Bob Clearwater, President
(501-884-6752)



Calion Field Trip Report

December 11, 1999

By Carl Amason

The Saturday morning was mild and cloudy and possible rains were in the forecast. As the day progressed it remained cloudy, mild and no rain developed, leaving the day neither wet nor dry, neither hot nor cold. It was a day to be remembered as excellent for field tripping and enjoying a full day in late autumn. There was some lingering fall coloring on a few of the deciduous trees and here and there a lingering flower or two as no killing frost had occurred. The ground was dry in spite of some surface moisture that gave the false impression that ground moisture was sufficient to give maximum plant growth for lush conditions.

Shortly after the first arrivals, which were Dr. Dale Thomas and two graduate students, Chris Doffit who is doing his Master's Thesis on the Flora of Ouachita County, Arkansas and Herbert Young, doing his Master's Thesis on the flora of Nevada County, Arkansas and then things, all good, began to happen. It was a welcome crew from Monroe, Louisiana because Dr. Thomas and Chris Doffit and Herbert Young have young mentally alert minds and they see "everything" and they eagerly helped with identification of any plant that gave any problems to any of the participants. Many of the field trippers were old timers but most were new to the manners and problems of being on a field trip that at times would be organized and at times just as disorganized. All of which contributed to the spontaneity of a good time being had by all. Raymond and Patsy Higgins of El Dorado are always amazed at the knowledge and also plant beauty to be found, and certainly not the most knowledgeable but interested people were Winifred Dawson, an internationalist who is six months in Canada and six months in Malvern with her Malvern fellow traveler Francis Smith. Winifred frequently

expresses the differences between flora and climate of near Ottawa, Canada and her winter domicile at Malvern. Two well-known regulars who are well known and respected for their interests were Sandra and Bob Gamble. Sometimes people wonder what others know and just as often what they don't know. Such is the camaraderie of a field trip. Regardless there are always some things different or unusual seen or at least it is seen through different eyes. Melissa Finley and husband came from Little Rock where they spent the night with her parents on Calion Lake. Two members of the Arkansas Fish and Game Commission Blacklands Prairie near Columbus were Donna Hertlein and John Lane who came from Nashville.

No one got lost in "metropolitan downtown" Calion and perhaps word of mouth had simplified the way to get together but any place, large or small is a dreadful place to get lost and especially when there is a time to assemble. Renee Arehart came from Little Rock and a quiet person, she had a radiant personality and it was obvious that she enjoyed the field trip. Clint and Francis Sowards were from Hot Springs Village and A.J. and Gloria Higgenbottom from Murfreesboro rounded out a full company of field trippers and away the group went, fanning out into groups reorganizing and getting into small groups again and again.

What plants did the group see? There are always so many things to see in anyone's woodlands but red berries were conspicuous and well known by everyone. American holly, Chinese holly, yaupon, and deciduous holly were all well represented. For orchid fanciers there was foliage of *Tipularia bicolor* [crane-fly orchid] found underfoot almost everywhere and the remaining evidence of *Habenaria repens*

[water-spider orchid] was seen in a badly needed-of-repairs pool where it grows as an aquatic, somewhat safely from the browsing of hungry deer. Only a few sprigs of the native witch hazel *Hamamelis virginiana* and a near by dry pool gave several green spots of *Micranthemum umbrosum* [shade mud-flower], a plant that has also cropped up in some wet, well watered nursery areas in El Dorado. Somehow it superficially resembles the Corsican mint. One exotic bulbous plant that certainly pleased Melissa Finley was *Narcissus cantabrigiae* 'Nylon', a white winter flowering white petticoat daffodil. Some other flowering exotics that pleased the strollers were some *Camellia sasanqua* cultivars, which suffered greatly from the extended droughty conditions, and a few *Camellia japonica* cultivars were just beginning to bloom. For the fern fanciers, there was one *Botrychium lunarioides* [grape fern] with its green prostrate winter foliage -- the fertile frond develops latter -- and in the pinewoods close by are two other *Botrychium*, both with fertile fronds but one is a large green infertile frond, The other is a smaller purplish infertile frond, otherwise they look very much alike. Of course there are other ferns about the place. No frond of the common *Ophioglossum crotalophorides* [adder's tongue fern] has had enough moisture to emerge from the soil. Of the many *Ilex vomitoria* plants there are several yellow berried bushes, and one is particularly well fruited.



In due time a stroll along the county paved road was begun. Dr. Thomas had a real field day as there were quite a few lingering plants in flower or conspicuous seed heads and the only hazard to beware of were fire-ant hills. Growing side by side for easy comparison were *Andropogon virginicus*, broom sedge bluestem, and *Andropogon ternarius*, split-beard bluestem. In the winter afternoon these two are easily told apart, split-beard bluestem has tufted seed heads on its stems that could be seen as far away as the grass could be seen. The broom sedge bluestem showed no mature seed heads at this time. Bluestem is a name for all of these related true grasses but that name is no real help to the amateur. Also, with a few open flowers, was *Gaillardia aestivalis* var. *flavovirens*, a perennial yellow blanket flower. Also in this sandy soil were winter rosettes of *Coreopsis lanceolata* and of *Rudbeckia hirta* [black-eyed Susan]. Woody plants in the fence row included three species of *Vaccinium*: *V. arboreum*, the winter sparkleberry with dangling black fruits; *V. elliotii*, the Mayberry whose sought after fruit is used in home cooking and canning; and *V. virgatum* late huckleberry -- really a blueberry -- on stoloniferous sprouts that creates colonies of fruiting bushes. Further on a clump of the destination plants were found in fruit (*Acanthospermum australe*). This is a South American native plant and how the world it escaped into Union County, Arkansas is not known but it used to be all along the graded road, but since the road is now blacktopped the entire length, it is becoming rare. Then, a little further, a fruiting groundcover colony of *Smilax pumila* was found. It was well covered with red fruit and was a beautiful sight in the dry wood just beyond a ditch where it was growing happily. One of the common names is sarsaparilla vine and here again Dr. Thomas added so much to the field trip by telling that the roots are good stomach tonic and that it is also a source of flavoring and that the dried leaves can give a delightful flavored tea. This thorn-less

"briar" is a very common woodland component in south Arkansas but finding a fruiting vine – usually less than 2 feet long – is unusual but here was a beautiful colony in fruit. On the woodland edge was an oak sapling of *Quercus velutina* [black oak] and Dr. Thomas again cut through the rough bark to show the orange cambium layer, which is a very distinctive diagnostic feature of this oak at any time. Quickly the group turned about faced and headed for the lunch as much had been seen and learned and an appetite had developed and in good time everyone found a seat in the house or on the porch and opened their lunch and continued to visit.

It didn't rain at any time and that was one of the reasons some of the central Arkansas people didn't come: heavy rains in the forecast. Some of the people who had traveled some distance began to break up the field trip, a few lingered for a few wildflowers to review and some stayed until about 4 PM. Two groups that headed north – one for Malvern and one for Hot Springs Village called before dark to say they had a

safe return trip but both had to drive through heavy pouring rain some distance until they got home. No rain fell on the field trip so it was a cloudy pleasant day, not too hot, not too cold, nor too dry or too wet—just a day to always remember.



Some notes on *Cunila origanoides* or Dittany

By Carl Amason

Dittany of the mint family is one of the most pleasing plants in Arkansas. It is a plant that grows almost all over the state. It is absent from the Mississippi Delta, the Grand Prairie, and is found sparingly on the western Coastal Plain. Where it is found it is very common. It is a woodlander' and it grows most often in open woods and along the edges, forming a plant which is almost evergreen or with only a few wintering leaves on the woody or semi-woody stems which seldom grow above eighteen or twenty inches tall. It grows with a minimum of care and in cultivation it is easily planted but seems to dislike deep sandy and prefers a heavy clay soil.

The plants are wonderful garden material because it isn't demanding. In nature and in gardens it leafs out mostly on

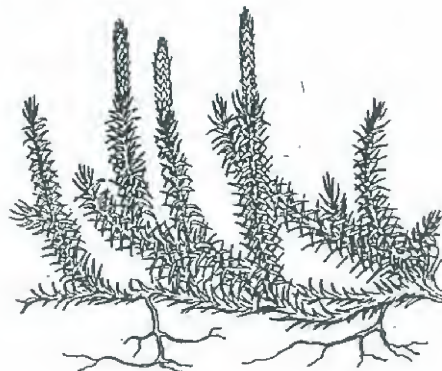
the upper twigs on almost leafless bare stems. The leaves are opposite, have minutely toothed edges and develop from one to two inches long. All summer these leaves will develop into grown ones, which will readily reveal that it is a mint, a member of the Labiatae by most authorities. In summer cymes of flower clusters develop in the axils of the square stems. Each twig will develop from two to maybe ten of these axillary cymes in the fall. The tiny but showy clusters of flowers are purple with a corolla of five petals but only two fertile stamens. Sometimes they last after the first hard freeze, about Thanksgiving or even latter.

Cunila is an American or New World genus while the name dittany is an Old World one that is applied to other

related plants in Europe. *Cunila origanoides* is the only common species native to the eastern and southern United States.

Early settlers made use of the plant where common as a tea for coughs and perhaps as a substitute for China tea, but the native doesn't have any caffeine. Opinion is that had it been an Old World native it would have been a classical herb to grow in an herbal bed or garden, but only local use was employed by the old timers.

Now it is a plant to enjoy in woods, woodland gardens, old waste areas and in gardens and yards. It seems that using it as an herbal tea was about the only use employed. It is easily propagated by seeds, cuttings, and transplants. This is truly a wonderful plant to enjoy.



Some Notes on *Fagus grandifolia*

By Carl Amason

One of the outstanding beautiful trees in much of the woods of Arkansas is the beech tree, *Fagus grandifolia*. It is found in about half of the state, being absent from the Mississippi Delta, the Grand Prairie, much of the eastern Ozarks and some of the Arkansas River Valley. On Crowley's Ridge, central Ozarks, and the southern Ouachita Mountains and on the western Coastal Plains, it is a common grand or large tree in the more moist slopes and along the terraces of bottomlands.

For wildlife, it is a valuable tree. For woodlands, it gives diversity and for the horticultural minded, it gives beauty, but for the growers of trees for timber, it isn't desirable due to two reasons: (1) it is extremely slow growing and (2) the log condition can't be assumed to be solid until it is cut and many times it isn't worth taking to the sawmill.

So much for its faults, it still has many redeeming features. For most people, it is a tree of great beauty in all seasons and well into its old age. It grows to large sizes in rich bottomlands and it furnishes a lot of

mast for wildlife. The hollow trees are homes to all wildlife that can get into a cavity such as squirrels, opossums, raccoons, and of course owls. Frequently only the shell of the tree is alive, hollow completely from the ground up and it is still able to bear beechnuts and leaves. But its greatest beauty is its size and the fall color of yellow, turning bronze or toasted cheese color and all winter the leaves will remain on the tree, being a pleasing brown color. In the spring, new leaves will appear, pushing off the old leaves, and these new leaves are a bright translucent green, much like stained glass in a cathedral or church, giving a greenish color to the sunshine that penetrates through the leaves. Such is the high spring season in the woods when so many little wildflowers, shrubs and other trees are in bloom. The flowers of the beech trees are fairly inconspicuous, both male and female flowers are lost among the emerging leaves to the sight of anyone except for those knowledgeable about such flowers. The male flowers are small round ball shaped greenish clusters and the females are small

globe masses with soft spines. The male flowers are not showy and they soon fall but the female flowers will develop into a soft spiny husk that contains two triangular nuts with sharp points. The nuts are sweet and edible even to humans but they are eagerly sought after by birds and beasts. The wood is hard in a tree of commercial value and it is used for tool handles, flooring, boards and such uses that oak wood would be used but it isn't long lasting in contact with the soil.

Aside from being of value in the woods for a source of food for wildlife, it is a great desirable tree for ornamentals in spite of not having showy flowers. And its sweet nuts are not a nuisance, either on the tree or on the ground. So what are its desirable virtues? It is a large tree that has architectural beauty in all seasons. Its green leaves of spring and summer are simple, about 2-4 inches and half as wide. The autumn color bright yellow is very striking. The trunk of the tree is smooth and light gray in color. One of its characteristics is that it is carved into by people with a knife and the carvings are evident as long as the tree lives. For some people this is a major fault. The tree is relatively free from any diseases and insect damages and its pollen is not considered to cause hay fever. But its slow growth usually implies that it is sometimes planted for the children or grandchildren in the family.

Essentially the tree is a very stabile species as there is no difference in the shape or color of the leaves among American trees (there are many variations in leaf shape and color in the European species.) so it all comes down to the situation that if a tree is on your property for a house site, try to save it, as young trees are very slow to mature. So always admire a grown tree in the wild and hope that it gives food and shelter for years and gives beauty and admiration for people for a long time.



Keep Arkansas Beautiful News

December 10, 1999

You may have seen that we broke ground last week [first week of December] for the first of many wildflower plantings around Little Rock. It is hoped that this will spread all over the state.

Look for materials regarding our first Annual Conference for KArB. This is to be held at Lake DeGray State Park on Thursday, February 24, 1999. Mark your calendar and plan to attend.

Linda Westergard pinnacle@arkansas.net



Editor's End Notes

So far, in this part of the state, we are still waiting for real winter to arrive. The spring beauty and henbit are blooming more like it was March and the daffodils have popped up and are budding. I usually can expect a few early blooms from those daffodils about the end of the first week in February -- not the middle of January. We finally did get some much-needed rain. My pond that was about four feet down is now filled to overflowing and the spring peepers have joined in chorus singing their courtship songs. The babbling brook in the valley is still fairly mute because of the drought but at least there is some flow.

The mild temperatures over the holidays kept calling me outside and for once I have our garden and flowerbeds cleaned up and mulched well before it is time to plant again.

Again I want to thank all of you who have submitted articles for this, **your** newsletter.



Please keep them coming. E-mailing those articles to me saves me a lot of time but for those of you not on the electronic super-highway yet I don't mind snail mail at all.

With all the activities scheduled if you don't have anything to do on your weekends this spring it is your own fault. I am sure the Ozark Chapter has some activities scheduled too. I just haven't gotten details from them yet.

There is a lot of exciting activities planned and in progress. Don't think you have to be an expert to take part. Some of our most vital members are self-taught individuals who have a love of nature and of our native plants in particular.

Go on one or more of the scheduled field trips. Attend the meetings. Offer to host a field trip in your neck of the woods. Join the logo design contest. Enjoy your society!

If you are not yet a member join now and reap the benefits of membership. If your mailing label doesn't have a 00 or LF on it is time to renew. Happy 2000!!!!

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The purpose of the Arkansas Native Plant Society

is to promote the preservation, conservation, and study of the wild plants and vegetation of Arkansas, the education of the public to the value of the native flora and its habitat, and the publication of related information.

Claytonia

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